

A message from Idaho's State Forester, Winston Wiggins



During 2004, Idaho's counties and communities continued to make great strides toward becoming more resilient to wildland fire. At the local level, first iterations of County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plans are nearly complete throughout the state. Many county wildland fire interagency groups are updating their plans to ensure that the *Healthy Forests Restoration Act Community Wildfire Protection Plan* guidelines are achieved. Our federal partners are working toward aligning their plans to treat hazardous fuels in the wildland urban interface with their local county wildland fire interagency groups' plans and projects. Hazardous fuels reduction projects on the non-federal lands within

and adjacent to our communities are being accomplished widely throughout the state. Our fire districts continue to enhance their capabilities to respond to wildland fire.

At the state level, the Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group continues to provide leadership, guidance, and strives for a unified approach to providing funds to counties and communities to assist with the implementation of their plans. The National Fire Plan Office in Washington D.C., on behalf of the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior, recognized the outstanding efforts at statewide collaboration by the Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group. The Working Group was awarded the 2004 National Fire Plan Award for collaboration at the 3rd Annual National Fire Plan Award Ceremony in Albuquerque, New Mexico (see photo).



Photo Left:

Left to right, back row:

Rebecca Watson, Department of the Interior, Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management; Robert Cope, Idaho Assn. of Counties, Lemhi County Commissioner; Jim Caswell, Administrator, Office of Species Conservation; Ken Kiser, Cooperative Fire Specialist, USDA Forest Service; Ben Estes, President, Idaho Fire Chiefs Assn.; Dave Tenny, Natural Resources and Environment Deputy Undersecretary Forestry

Left to right, front row:

Gene Lonning, Fuels Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs; Peg Polichio, Idaho National Fire Plan Coordinator – USFS, Idaho Department of Lands; Susan Giannettino, Deputy State Director, Natural Resources, Idaho Bureau of Land Management; Dennis Seidman, Refuge Operations Support, US Fish & Wildlife Service

County, community, state, federal, tribal, and citizen partners at the local level deserve commendation for their considerable efforts and accomplishments. I am confident that, due to the dialogue in which we have engaged and the investments that have been made in Idaho during the past several years, our communities and counties will be more resilient to wildland fire when it strikes next.

Winston Wiggins
Director and State Forester
Idaho Department of Lands